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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
----------102151Z 130186 /73
O 101840Z FEB 77 ZFF-6
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4027
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T DAR ES SALAAM 0639

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TZ, KE
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT NYERERE'S REQUEST FOR US-UK GOOD OFFICE WITH KENYA

1. SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTRY PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, A.B. NYAKYI CALLED ME TO FOREIGN MINISTRY FEBRUARY 10 TO ASK IN NAME PRESIDENT NYERERE FOR US GOOD OFFICES WITH GOVERNMENT OF KENYA TO TRY PREVENT POSSIBLE MAJOR INCIDENT BETWEEN KENYA AND TANZANIA FEBRUARY 11. UK ALSO BEING GIVEN SAME REQUEST. END SUMMARY.

2. FOREIGN OFFICE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY A. B. NYAKYI CALLED ME IN AT 1930 LOCAL TIME FEBRUARY 10 TO SAY HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY PRESIDENT NYERERE TO ASK ME FOR US "GOOD OFFICES" TO PREVENT MAJOR INCIDENT WHICH TANGOV FEARS MAY TAKE PLACE IN NAIROBI FEBRUARY 11 AND LEAD TO DANGEROUS FURTHER DETERIORATION IN TANZANIAN-KENYAN RELATIONS.

3. NYAKYI REVIEWED BREAK-UP OF EAST AFRICAN AIRLINES (EAC), CLOSURE OF BORDER, "MOLESTATION" OF TANZANIAN EMPLOYEES OF EAC IN NAIROBI, GIVING AND WITHDRAWING IN PAST FEW DAYS BY GOK OF CLEARANCE FOR BRITISH-ARRANGED CHARTER OF BELGIAN AIRCRAFT TO EVACUATE TANZANIANS, INTENSIVE ABUSE HEAPED ON TANZANIANS, SPECIFICALLY TODAY INCLUDING PRESIDENT NYERERE, BY KENYAN PRESS: AND,
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MOST IMPORTANTLY, ALLEGED GOK ARRANGING OF MASS PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION IN NAIROBI FEBRUARY 11 AGAINST TANZANIA WHICH WAS SCHEDULED OCCUR AT SAME TIME AS EVACUATION OF TANZANIANS NOW SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE. (NYAKYI SAID CLEARANCE HAD BEEN RESTORED FOR DEPARTURE AIRCRAFT FROM NAIROBI AT 1500 LOCAL TIME FEBRUARY 11 AS RESULT REPEATED INTERVENTION BY UK.) NYAKYI INSISTED THAT IF, AS NYERERE FEARS, TANZANIANS ARE HURT OR FURTHER MOLESTED IN

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NAIROBI, TANZANIA WILL HAVE TO RETALIATE AND THERE WAS
"NO TELLING WHAT WILL HAPPEN."

4. IN RESPONSE MY QUERY, NYAKYI SAID PRESIDENT HAD ASKED HIM TO
SPEAK ONLY TO US AND UK, BECAUSE BRITISH HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN
RECENT DAYS AND HE HAD GREAT TRUST IN US. AFTER A LITTLE PROBING,
NYAKYI SAID WHAT TANZANIA REALLY WANTED WAS FOR GOK TO CANCEL OR
POSTPONE DEMONSTRATION. WHEN I SAID "OR TAKE ADEQUATE
PRECAUTIONS?", HE REPLIED "WE DON'T SEE HOW THEY CAN," BUT
ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO COOL THEM DOWN WOULD BE HELPFUL.

5. I SAID I WOULD RELAY REQUEST TO WASHINGTON AT ONCE, BUT POINTED OUT

TIME ITSELF MIGHT MAKE ANY ACTION IMPOSSIBLE. 1500 TOMORROW IN
NAIROBI WAS 0700 IN WASHINGTON. WE CERTAINLY LAMENTED EAST
AFRICAN NEIGHBORS' QUARRELS AND DID NOT WISH TO SEE TENSION OR
FIGHTING. HOWEVER, TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, WE HAD NEVER HAD A
WORD TO SAY IN THIS KIND OF A SITUATION IN THIS AREA BEFORE,
UNLIKE SITUATIONS WHERE WE HAD A LONG HISTORY OF CONCERN, E.G.,
GREECE-TURKEY OR PAKISTAN-INDIA. ALSO, A FEW MONTHS AGO, WHEN
UGANDA AND KENYA WERE IN HIGH STATE OF TENSION, PRESIDENT
NYERERE HIMSELF HAD ASKED US TO STAY CLEAR AND LEAVE SITUATION TO
EAST AFRICANS. HOWEVER, HE COULD COUNT ON PRESIDENT'S CONCERN AND
REQUEST BEING REPORTED TO WASHINGTON URGENTLY.

6. FOR NAIROBI: UK HIGH COMMISSIONER BROWN IS NOW WITH NYAKYI TO
RECEIVE SAME MESSAGE. BRIEF CONSULTATION WITH HIM BEFOREHAND
INDICATES BRITISH HAVE BEEN FAIRLY ACTIVE IN TRYING TO HELP
WITH EVACUATION AND OTHER MATTERS. NEITHER HIGH COMMISSIONER NOR
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I HAVE ANY IDEA HOW DANGEROUS SITUATION IN NAIROBI TOMORROW
MAY BE. WE AGREE THAT NYERERE MAY BE EXAGGERATING IT. IT WOULD BE
MOST USEFUL, THEREFORE, IF AMBASSADOR MARSHALL COULD COMMENT ON
THIS AND ON IMPLICATIONS OF ANY US APPROACH TO GOK ASAP.

7. FOR LONDON: EMBASSY LONDON MAY ALSO BE IN POSITION PROVIDE
DEPARTMENT WITH BETTER PICTURE UK VIEW THAN I HAVE FROM BROWN
HERE. (FYI: BROWN'S PRESENT INTENTION IS TO RECOMMEND TO
LONDON TO GO AHEAD WITH EFFORT TO DO WHAT IT CAN IN NAIROBI BECAUSE
OF (A) IMPORTANT BRITISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS AT STAKE IN QUARREL,
(B) DESIRABILITY MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH TANZANIA, AND (C)
TRYING TO PREVENT ERUPTION OF MAJOR REGIONAL CLASH IN EAST AFRICA.)

8. COMMENT: MY OWN INCLINATION IS PARALLEL--EXCEPT, OF COURSE,
THAT US COMMERCIAL INTEREST IS MINIMAL. NYERERE IS CLEARLY IN A
HIGH STATE OF NERVES. THIS IS FIRST TIME I KNOW OF THAT HE HAS
TURNED TO US FOR FAVOR AND WE ARE LIKELY TO FIND HIM USEFUL
LATER ON SOUTHERN AFRICA PROBLEM. ALSO, IN THIS CASE, WE MAY BE
ABLE HONESTLY TO CARRY WATER ON BOTH SHOULDERS BY (A) EMBASSY

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NAIROBI'S GOING TO GOK AND SUGGESTING THAT IT COOL SITUATION, INCLUDING CANCELLATION OR POSTPONEMENT OF DEMONSTRATION AND ALSO INDICATING THAT US IS APPROACHING DAR ES SALAAM WITH WORDS OF CAUTION, AND AT SAME TIME, (B) EMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM'S GOING TO TANGOV TO REPORT THAT WE HAVE GOT IN TOUCH WITH GOK BUT ALSO URGING IT TO MOVE PROMPTLY TOWARD PEACEFUL SOLUTION, PERHAPS BY REOPENING OF BORDER WHICH IS CAUSING INTERNATIONAL HARDSHIPS.

9. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS ASAP.
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